To W. L. Garrison.

November 19 1852

125 Having my dear Friend written to you as the Chairman of the Board, I must now write a few lines on my own account - I have long hoped to see you out here some day, & I presume your coming may depend in some measure upon the state of things that you believe to exist here, & the probability there is of your visit, should you come, being usefull - I will therefor briefly point out as candidly as I can the position of Anti slavery matters here -

The Anti slavery sentiment that exists has been brought out chiefly by the Politicians, & the Anti slavery Ministry or perhaps to speak more properly, it has been directed & led by them - The feeling of aversion to Slavery is growing fast, & those who avow it are now treated respectfully - It is also rising in tone, & taking decidedly higher ground than formerly - There is great hostility to the Fugitive Slave law, & Fugitives are comparatively safe, passing through here by fives & tens at a time, with but little apprehension on the part of their friends, of capture -

Outside of our Board I am not aware of any who hold to the views of the American A. S. Society in all points - Mrs Ernst & two or three others are zealous supporters of its doctrines - My own judgment has never been able to percieve the necessity or policy of Disunion, or of the extreme proslavery character of the Constitution - On these questions the ground taken by Gerrit Smith suits me the best of any - My idea

however is, that if the people can be brought to abhor Slavery, they will soon adopt a construction of the Constitution in favor of Abolition – Honest & wise men honestly differ about its meaning, & when the people with it to be antislavery instead of proslavery, I do not think they will have to violate their Consciences to so read it – I feel that I could not in candor withhold this much of my own opinions – & though they differ from yours in these particulars, still no one will welcome you more cordially to this Convention than I shall, (should you be prevailed onto come) because I know the Slave has no more faithful, fearless, & able advo-
= cate than yourself, no one more true to shew forth the enormity of his wrongs, or more jealous to plead for their redress & this after all seems to me to be the main work to be done You I feel confident could now do it here before large crowds of respectful listeners – could greatly promote the Cause & remove much error & prejudice respecting yourself

The call we shall publish will invite Antislavery people generally, without reference to Sect, party, or opinion, & we hope when it goes to the public to be able to announce the names of yourself, Mr Phillips, & perhaps Mr Parker, as speakers that have signified their intention to be present –

It is something of an experiment, attempting to have a Convention here, without it's being headed by some leading Politicians & Ministers, & unless we can get the aid of some prominent speakers, we shall feel doubtful of the success of it – What I have this said to you, I wish also to say to Mr Phillips, & as respects the feeble expressions of my

feeling of personal esteem, admiration, & confidence,
they apply with equal sincerity to him likewise

As I know you to be on intimate terms, I will ask you
to consider this as a joint letter, & will thank you to request
Mr Phillips to read it.

With the kindest regards to both of you I am
most sincerely your Friend
C. Donaldson